



AOT in Action

TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from the Director:

Good morning.

We're calling for nominations! Each year, along with organizing the Governor's Conference on Tourism, AOT coordinates the Governor's Tourism Awards. These industry awards honor individuals and organizations that have made noteworthy contributions during the past year for the betterment of the tourism industry. These award recipients are fine examples of leadership, commitment and teamwork that make the Grand Canyon State a premier travel destination.

We invite you to review the award categories and guidelines to submit nominations for individuals and/or organizations. The winners will be awarded at the Governor's Tourism Awards Luncheon on Thursday, July 10, 2008 in Tucson, Arizona.

All submissions must be received by Thursday, May 15, 2008.

Please visit the [Governor's Conference on Tourism](#) section of www.azot.gov for award categories, guidelines and nomination forms.

To register for the conference please visit, www.aztourismconference.com.

Have a great week.

Margie R. Emmert

Margie A. Emmermann
Director
Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News Flash

SAVE the Date: Grand Impressions Workshops are here!

Please mark your calendars for May 30 and June 6 for Grand Impressions Customer Service Workshops. In an effort to continually offer the best in visitor services to the traveling public, AOT conducts a complimentary certification program for Arizona's visitor center staff and front-line hospitality employees. The Grand Impressions program is designed to enhance customer service skills, present a unified message to visitors, and to increase knowledge of the state and its attractions. Front-line employees within the tourism industry and individuals in city, county, state and tribal government agencies that deal directly with visitors are strongly encouraged to attend these workshops. Specific program details will follow in the coming weeks!

SAVE the DATE: ATU Workshop – How to Create Effective Collateral Material

The Arizona Office of Tourism is proud to present Arizona Tourism University's complimentary workshop: "**How to Create Effective Collateral Material.**"

Are you looking for ways to make your brochures, rack cards, flyers, travel guides and fact sheets stand out from the pack? Do you want to learn how to get the biggest bang for your buck and how to avoid expensive mistakes when producing printed marketing materials? Join us for the next ATU workshop "**How to Create Effective Collateral Materials**" and you will learn about the five key processes in creating brochures, guides and other travel collateral – from project inception to the distribution of your final product. Find out about the best practices in creating collateral materials from a professional travel writing editor. Hear about design and print production considerations from a printer. Learn tips and strategies that will result in marketing collateral that delivers. Register now by contacting Meghan Dorn at 602-364-3708 or mdorn@azot.gov.

The workshop will be held in the following locations:

Tuesday, May 13, 2008

1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

[Blazin' M Ranch](#)

Cottonwood, AZ, 86326

928-634-0334

Thursday, May 15, 2008

1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

[Hilton Tucson El Conquistador Golf & Tennis Resort](#)

10000 N. Oracle Rd

Tucson, AZ 85704

520-544-5000

AOT Plans for 2009 Professional Travel Planner's Guide Publication

The Arizona Office of Tourism's Travel Industry Marketing Division is publishing the 2009 *Professional Travel Planner's Guide*. *PTPG* is the official fulfillment publication for the AOT's Travel Industry Marketing Division. This comprehensive statewide guide assists tour operators and travel agents in the U.S. and in key international countries as they create group and individual tour packages throughout Arizona.

With a circulation of 25,000 annually, *PTPG* is distributed by AOT's international offices (Japan, Mexico, Canada, Great Britain, France and Germany), at domestic and international trade shows, and at national promotional events. It is also direct-mailed to clients in AOT's database, as well as in response to client inquiries. Additionally, *PTPG* will be available for instant download on AOT's website.

PTPG includes extensive itineraries, maps, events, motorcoach, and tour information designed to identify operators' needs and educate them on the range and diversity of destinations, attractions and facilities in Arizona. The publication also includes Resource Guides with Directory Listings for the following categories.

- Accommodations
- Activities & Recreation
- Attractions & Shopping
- Restaurants
- Receptive Services & DMCs
- Transportation

For additional information and to obtain a media kit, contact Kathleen Lockhart of Hennen Publishing and Marketing Group at kathleen@hennenpmg.com or at 480-664-0541.

AOT Represented at Annual Visitor Services Meeting

Visitor Services Manager, Brian Lang, attended the Destination Marketing Association International-Visitor Service Shirtsleeve meeting in Bloomington, Indiana, April 6-9, 2008. The session was an informal, get-down-to-business work sessions that focused on Visitor Services topics. The real value of "Shirtsleeves" is the opportunity to bring your experiences and challenges to the table for unparalleled peer-to-peer problem-solving. Sessions included, Open discussion on visitor services-center issues, community partnerships to enhance visitor experiences, visitor centers as a reflection of the community, building a better communications tool kit, 60 visitor services ideas in 60 minutes. A record-breaking 97 professionals from 74 destination marketing organizations attended the event. For more information, contact Brian Lang at 602-364-3694 or via e-mail at blang@azot.gov.

Industry News

Super Bowl XLII Generates Record \$500 Million for Arizona

The Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee announced the results of an economic impact study that was conducted by the W.P. Carey School of Business at Arizona State University to measure the economic impact of Super Bowl XLII, which was played on February 3, 2008 in Glendale, AZ. The results of the research done by students in the Sports Business MBA program at ASU found that Super Bowl XLII generated a record \$500.6 million in direct and indirect spending by visitors and organizations who came to Arizona for the Super Bowl. "The numbers underscore what we know - that Arizona is a fantastic place for major events, sporting or otherwise," said Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano. "The \$500 million boost exceeded all of our expectations,

and came at the right time. Congratulations to the Super Bowl committee - and all of Arizona - for laying out the welcome mat for our visitors, and for producing a spectacular event."

Visitor spending was determined by taking surveys throughout the Valley of the Sun at a variety of Super Bowl XLII related events. More than 1,500 surveys were collected to represent a cross-section of the visitors who traveled to Arizona for Super Bowl week. Respondents were asked a variety of questions including: the purpose of their trip, the events they had attended or planned to attend, the number of nights they would be staying in Arizona, their method of transportation to Arizona, where they were staying, the spending of their travel party across a range of spending categories, and a variety of other questions. The study focused on estimating the gross economic impact of Super Bowl XLII, defined as the amount of direct and indirect visitor and organizational spending induced by the event.

Greater Phoenix CVB Annual Meeting May 22

The Greater Phoenix CVB Annual Meeting and Luncheon will be held Thursday, May 22, at Arizona Biltmore Resort & Spa. It will begin at 9:30 a.m. with an educational session presented by Peter C. Yesawich, who will speak about "Emerging Lifestyles and Travel Trends: Implications for Marketing Phoenix in the Year Ahead." Yesawich is a popular and respected veteran of the speaking circuit who has addressed the Greater Phoenix CVB Annual Meeting and Luncheon several times in recent years. As chairman and CEO of Ypartnership — a marketing, advertising and public relations agency for travel, leisure and lifestyle clients — Yesawich regularly comments on travel trends in The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Wall Street Journal, USA Today, Time, Newsweek and Business Week, and on broadcast networks such as CNN, CNBC, MSNBC, National Public Radio and BBC World. He is also a co-author of "Marketing Leadership in Hospitality," published by Prentice Hall. A reception and lunch will follow, with Cowherd providing the keynote address. As the host of the daily program "The Herd" on ESPN Radio, Cowherd's clever and topical commentary reaches more than 20 million listeners each week. Sports Illustrated named him the 2005 Radio Personality of the Year, commending the 44-year-old broadcaster for "treating listeners like adults" and "refusing to rely on angry ranting." The meeting is open to the tourism community of Arizona. Ticket information is available at www.visitphoenix.com/annualmeeting.

TIA Calls on Candidates to Improve Air Travel When in Office

In the wake of the cancellation of hundreds of airline flights and the growing dismay among travelers, the Travel Industry Association Tuesday called on the three remaining presidential candidates to issue detailed plans to improve the air travel process during their term in office. For its part, TIA pledged to lead a broader discussion on the need for comprehensive reforms and detail what it called the "profound consequences of inaction." In its statement, Roger Dow, president and CEO of TIA, said "The entire travel community--including hotels, rental cars, destinations, theme parks and, most importantly, travelers--is dependent on a safe, secure and efficient air travel system."

TIA called on Senators Clinton, McCain and Obama to issue comprehensive plans by Memorial Day to fix major elements of the air travel system during their term in office. TIA said it would assist the candidates by conducting research on the problem, convening a forum of the entire travel community to discuss what can be done to fix the system and developing a blueprint for air travel reform to be provided to the next president. Details at 202-408-2183. (*Special to TA*)

Economist: Canadian Business Travel May Slow

The business travel industry in Canada is bound to feel the effects of the economic slowdown in the US, according to a senior economist from Scotiabank. That impact could also be felt in the meetings market according to [TravelMole](#). Canada's business travel industry is expected to continue growing, but at a slower rate compared to recent years, said economist Adrienne Warren. She said most service sectors are not as exposed to troubles in the US as other parts of the Canadian economy, but travel and tourism will likely be an unfortunate exception. "We have already seen some pressure from the high Canadian dollar, at least in terms of US travel to Canada," she said. "In terms of the travel industry that probably means higher fuel costs, higher air fares," she said. "We saw some announcements today from Air Canada and WestJet, passing on higher prices. You can carry it for so long, but eventually these prices will begin to creep into restaurant prices, hotel prices." Although she later added that the price of oil might return to the range of US\$95/barrel, she said the problem will not go away in the next couple of years. "Get used to it," she advised.

Use of Social Media Monitoring Growing

They might not be direct response vehicles, but direct marketers should ignore social media and the user-generated content they contain at their own peril says a recent article in [BtoB](#). In addition to enormous reach (Forrester Research reports nearly half of U.S. online adults now use them), social media offer a treasure trove of information – information that can be mined using monitoring and analysis technologies to uncover insights about things like customer satisfaction with a company's direct marketing tactics, campaign performance and the viral spread of marketing messages. "Social media monitoring gives direct marketers an opportunity to keep their fingers on the pulse of how consumers are responding – to what extent current campaigns are successful, how they need to refine campaigns over time and, ultimately, the business outcomes," said Jeff Zabin, research fellow at Boston-based Aberdeen Group. According to Aberdeen Group's findings, adoption of social media monitoring and analysis technologies is growing. Fifty-two percent of companies currently had a social media monitoring and analysis solution in place. Another 33 percent either had budget planned for such solutions within the next 12 months, or were interested in the technologies and evaluating providers. In addition, survey respondents indicated that social media monitoring and analysis can benefit a greater than expected number of corporate functions, from customer care to public relations and legal. "Going into this process, my assumption was that it's all about marketing," Zabin said. "In fact, it turns out that social media monitoring can inform everything from product development to legal departments, who want to understand if there are any crises on the horizon that they need to pay attention to."

Despite Down Economy, PWC Predicts Record Hotel Investment

The U.S. lodging industry will invest approximately \$5.85 billion in 2008, a 6.4 percent increase over 2007, according to a PricewaterhouseCoopers forecast. PwC said the U.S. lodging industry had a record capital investment of \$5 billion and \$5.5 billion in 2006 and 2007, respectively. The 2008 increase reflects spending on separate spaces in hotel rooms, in-room technology, enhanced bedding, flat-screen TVs, high-speed wireless Internet, self check-in kiosks, computer printers in business centers, upgrades of traditional desks to ergonomic work stations and upgrades of complimentary breakfasts. (www.TravelWeekly.com, 4/14)

Skyrocketing Gas Prices May Help Travelers Save Money

From big-name hotels to tiny bed-and-breakfasts, the lodging industry has started rolling out incentives that help guests offset the costs of hitting the road. Some are offering prepaid gasoline cards, ranging from \$10 to \$50; others are extending cash bonuses or reduced room rates to guests who drive a hybrid vehicle or take a train or bus to their destination. Hoteliers' biggest

concern is that, should gasoline hit a nationwide price of \$3.50, guests will begin canceling reservations. (*Page D5, Wall Street Journal*)

Feds to Test International Registered Traveler Program

U.S. Customs and Border Protection on June 10 will launch the Global Entry program, designed to expedite the screening and processing of low-risk, frequent international travelers entering the U.S. Global Entry will be available for U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents who are frequent international travelers, provided they have not been found guilty of a criminal offense, charged with a customs or immigration offense or declared inadmissible to the U.S. under immigration legislation. Biometric fingerprint technology will be used to verify the passenger's identity and confirm his or her status as a Global Entry participant. A pilot program will be initially conducted at New York Kennedy, Houston Bush Intercontinental and Washington Dulles airports.

The program will begin processing applications from the public starting May 12. Applications for enrollment in the Global Entry program will be available at www.pay.gov. The fee is \$100. (www.TravelWeekly.com, 4/14; www.BusinessTravelNews.com, 4/14)

North American Travelers Undeterred by Tough Travel Conditions

You might think airline cancellations, a slowing economy, rising gas prices and a weak dollar would deliver a powerful punch that would deter US travelers. But that's apparently not the case at all. Americans appear to be sticking to summer vacation plans. Business travelers are still moving about the country. But the one evident change is a newfound emphasis on cutting costs. "Leisure travel is kind of like food and rent — it's considered an essential cost within a relevant range," said Bjorn Hanson, who follows the hospitality industry for PricewaterhouseCoopers. The number of people traveling set records in 2007, and those figures are holding steady so far this year. "Travel agents and industry analysts report robust bookings for domestic, international and business travel. That is even true for trips to Europe, but some people are opting for destinations where the dollar goes further, like Portugal instead of Britain," says *The New York Times*. Mr. Hanson says companies have cut back so much since 2000 that there is not much fat left to trim, but businesses are enforcing travel policies more strictly to control costs. Although the airlines are struggling with skyrocketing fuel prices, aging planes and calls for tighter regulation, one bright spot is that passengers are still filling up seats and booking flights. "We're concerned about a recession, but probably more in the second half of the year," said John Heimlich, chief economist for the Air Transport Association. He added that, so far at least, airlines have not announced widespread fare sales. Hotels have followed suit in not doing much discounting. Room rates in the United States were up 6 percent in 2007, to an average of \$104 a night, and increased 5 percent in the first quarter of this year, according to Smith Travel Research. One factor bolstering this demand is the influx of foreign travelers. In 2007, some 57 million foreigners traveled to the United States, spending \$123 billion — a record on both counts, according to the Department of Commerce. Over all, airlines based in the United States carried 769 million passengers last year, an annual record. (*Report by David Wilkening, TravelMole e-Newsletter*)